

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the present application in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-25 are currently pending in the present application. The Office Action is non-final. Claims 1-8, 10-16 and 20 have been amended without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. The claims have been amended to improve clarity of the language and to correct claim dependencies. Claim 14 is currently allowed. No new matter has been added by way of the amendments.

Based upon the above considerations, entry of the present Amendment is respectfully requested.

Interview

Examiner Kosack is thanked for granting an interview with Applicants' representative on December 30, 2009, in which the Examiner agreed to consider rejoining withdrawn claims and non-elected species. Specifically, the Examiner stated that as there was allowable subject matter in the examined claims, he would be willing to perform an additional search for non-elected species, although he would not guarantee that his search would be fully commensurate in scope with the broadest composition claims.

Issue under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

In the Office Action it is stated that independent claim 1 (and claims 2, 4, 6, 7, and 17, which depend from claim 1) stands rejected, because V^1 to V^{n+1} and X^1 to X^{m+1} are not defined in the claim. Claim 1 has been amended to define these terms.

Claim 6 stands rejected for lacking an antecedent basis for the terms j and k, and claim 7 for lacking an antecedent basis for the terms R₁ and R₃. Claims 6 and 7 have been amended to depend from claim 4, which provides an antecedent basis for the terms at issue. In view of the discussion above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Rejoinder of Withdrawn Claims and Non-Elected Species

Applicants respectfully request that Examiner consider rejoinder of withdrawn claims and non-elected species as discussed in the interview of December 30, 2009, and in view of the instant Amendment.

CONCLUSION

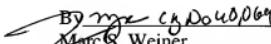
In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Stephanie A. Wardwell, Reg. No. 48,025 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,



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